

September 5, 2002

Public Notice for Section 401 Water Quality Certification

**BrookTrails Community Township - Willits Creek Restoration
WDID No. 1B02132WNME**

Mendocino County

On August 14, 2002, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from BrookTrails Community Township requesting Federal Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification for the Willits Creek Restoration project in Mendocino County, California. The application was deemed complete on September 4, 2002. The proposed project causes disturbances to waters of the United States associated with Willits Creek, tributary to Outlet Creek in the Eel River Hydrologic Unit No. 111.00.

The proposed project is located near Willits, California in Willits Creek, River Mile 13, in Township 18 North, Range 14 West, HB&M.

The project proposes to improve salmonid spawning and rearing habitat throughout a 5,765-foot reach of Willits Creek. This will be achieved through revegetation of native riparian species, installation of willow mattresses, bank re-sloping, and the installation of vortex weirs, wing deflectors, and log structures. Work will occur in 3 primary project areas. The first primary project area is 775 feet in length. This project will reestablish riparian vegetation along a 700-foot stretch of streambank. Fifty-foot wide corridors of native vegetation will be planted on both sides of Willits Creek. Several sections of eroded streambank will be re-sloped at a ratio of 2:1, and replanted with native riparian species. Three hundred feet of willow mattress will be installed at this site to protect the streambanks and to provide riparian canopy. Three vortex weirs and three opposing wing deflectors will be designed and constructed as specified in the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual. Approximately 2,000 feet of exclusionary fence will also be installed to protect the stream and newly planted vegetation.

The second primary project area includes several sections of eroding streambank that will be re-sloped at a ratio of 2:1, and stabilized with rock and native vegetation. Three boulder vortex weirs and three boulder wing deflectors will be constructed. The third primary project area involves 70 feet of stream that will be planted with native riparian species within a 25-foot corridor on both sides of the creek. Four hundred feet of exclusionary fencing will be installed in order to protect the vegetation from wildlife grazing. An educational kiosk will be constructed along Willits Creek with an informational display about restoration efforts along the creek.

Compensatory mitigation is not required for this project. Noncompensatory mitigation measures include the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs). All work for this project will be conducted during the low-flow period June 15- October 15. All work will be performed in accordance with the methods described in the CDFG Salmonid Habitat Restoration Manual.

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, adopted a Negative Declaration for CDFG-funded salmon and steelhead restoration projects.

Staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and Title 23, California Code of Regulations, Sections 3830-3869. Comments on this project should be submitted to Roy O'Connor at oonr@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.